



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer  
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Chief Administrative Officer

At its meeting held November 3, 2004, the Board took the following action:

66-A

The following statement was entered into the record for Supervisors Yaroslavsky and Molina:

“During the last few years, when County finances were particularly strained, all County departments were asked to ensure that departmental spending be kept in line with available/budgeted revenues. This has been especially true in the case of the Sheriff’s Department, where the Sheriff has made a strong and difficult commitment to meet this guiding principle of fiscal management.

“One of the consequences of the Sheriff’s budget management strategies was the loss of inmate capacity in the County’s jail system. In fact, the loss of bed space in the jails has resulted in a reduction of capacity from its recent peak of 22,214 to its present 17,400. This reduction has forced the Sheriff to release thousands of inmates from the jails before completing their sentences.

“As a result of this and other cutbacks in the Sheriff’s department and other law enforcement agencies in the county, the Board of Supervisors placed Measure A on the November 2, 2004 ballot in order to raise the necessary funds to restore the cuts and expand law enforcement and related services countywide. With the failure of Measure A, funds that the Sheriff was anticipating for these law enforcement purposes will not be forthcoming.

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“However, the continued early release of inmates diminishes the integrity of our criminal justice system and undermines the difficult and dangerous work of law enforcement. The consequences of this situation are felt in every community of Los Angeles County. Sheriff Baca developed a Master Plan that focused on improving jail operations, specifically the pros and cons of opening or expanding particular facilities and costs of these options.

“While the election results make it impossible to accomplish all of the Sheriff’s goals, the recent closing of the County’s financial books, and the larger than anticipated fund balance, may afford the Sheriff’s Department the ability to at least address the problems associated with the ‘early release’ program.”

Therefore, Supervisor Yaroslavsky made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Antonovich, that the Chief Administrative Officer and Sheriff be directed to jointly prepare a plan to end the present early release program in our County jails for consideration by the Board in three weeks, including identifying the amount and source of funding required.

The following statement was entered into the record for Supervisors Antonovich and Knabe:

“On November 2, 2004, County Measure A was defeated by the voters of this County. Measure A intended to raise revenues exclusively for law enforcement by increasing the County’s sales tax by a half-cent.

“Meanwhile, thousands of inmates are being released early from jail and the years of budget cuts are having a crippling impact on the Sheriff’s ability to provide adequate law enforcement services. The Sheriff must have adequate funding which can be accomplished with existing funds coupled with the passage of State Proposition 1A that assures a stable stream of funding for local governments, including this County.

“With fiscal stability on the horizon, this Board needs to step up to the plate and place public safety as its number one priority by developing a comprehensive plan to place the Sheriff’s Department on a long-term path to fiscal recovery.

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66-A (Continued)

Therefore, Supervisor Antonovich made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Knabe, that the Board direct the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a report at the November 23, 2004 Board meeting which shall include, but not be limited to, a long-term plan to revive the Sheriff's Department from years of budget reductions starting with the elimination of early releases of inmates and increased sworn personnel. The report shall also include a variety of funding options for the Sheriff's short-term and long-term needs, including the feasibility of discontinuing the supplanting of Proposition 172 funds by using those revenues as a means to meet the Maintenance of Effort to qualify for Proposition 172 funds.

After discussion, the Board agreed to combine the aforementioned motions. By common consent, there being no objection, the Board took the following actions:

1. Directed the Chief Administrative Officer and Sheriff to jointly prepare a plan to end the present early release program in the County jails for Board consideration on November 23, 2004, including identifying the amount and source of funding required; and
2. Directed the Chief Administrative Officer to provide a report at the November 23, 2004 Board meeting including, but not limited to:
  - A long-term plan to revive the Sheriff's Department from years of budget reductions starting with the elimination of early releases of inmates and increased sworn personnel; and
  - A variety of funding options for the Sheriff's short-term and long-term needs, including the feasibility of discontinuing the supplanting of Proposition 172 funds by using those revenues as a means to meet the Maintenance of Effort to qualify for Proposition 172 funds.

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Copies distributed:

Each Supervisor

Chief Deputy County Counsel

Letter sent to:

Sheriff

November 5, 2004

The Honorable Leroy D. Baca  
Sheriff, Los Angeles County  
Sherman Block Sheriff's Headquarters  
4700 Ramona Boulevard, 4th Floor  
Monterey Park, CA 91754

Dear Sheriff Baca:

At its meeting held November 3, 2004, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors requested you, in conjunction with the Chief Administrative Officer, to report back to the Board at the meeting of November 23, 2004 regarding a plan to end the present early release program in the County jails.

For your information, enclosed is a copy of the Minute Order detailing the Board's action.

Very truly yours,

VIOLET VARONA-LUKENS  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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Enclosure